

"IT'S GRAFT, GRAFT, GRAFT!"

COMPLAINT OF A TAXPAYER UNDER THE CASSIDY GOVERNMENT

A Distinct Rebuke Given on Monday, However, to the Patent Curbing and Vitrified Brick Schemes by John C. Watt, Who Appeared and Talked Out in Meeting.

It looks as though the days of the patent curbing graft and the vitrified brick graft in Queens were numbered. Aroused by the recent exposure of the deal printed in The Sun several taxpayers of that borough have got together and employed John C. Watt, formerly assistant corporation counsel, to take steps to prevent the awarding of the contracts for street improvements involving about \$250,000, for which bids were opened by President Cassidy on May 1. A large number of contractors who feel that Cassidy did not give them a square deal are also among the protesters to fight the awards and it is likely that the Borough President will be enjoined within the next few days from taking further steps in the matter.

Proposals were advertised for in the City Record recently and May 1 was set as the date for the opening of the bids. At that time Mr. Watt appeared in Cassidy's office and made a strong protest against the opening of the bids by the awarding of the contracts on the ground that the specifications did not conform to the requirements of the Charter, inasmuch as the curbing called for was a patented article and the vitrified brick pavement the subject of restricted bidding. Mr. Watt talked right out in meeting. He made it plain to the Borough President that the clients whose property would be assessed for a large share of the improvement would stand no nonsense and that they would insist that the law be complied with in every particular. Cassidy was evidently surprised at this display of courage on the part of taxpayers who had for obvious reasons heretofore carefully refrained from crossing the wishes of the big boss. Mr. Watt to reduce his protest to writing and submit it later.

But Cassidy was not half as much surprised at the protest of the property owners as were the vast majority of the contractors who had journeyed to the Borough President's office to submit bids for the work. If they had been as wise before the visit as after it the chances are that they would have stayed away and saved themselves the trouble of preparing estimates. When they got there they found that a joker had been inserted in the specifications in relation to the vitrified clay brick that made it practically impossible for them to comply with the terms of the contract. All agree that this clause was not in the specifications originally and the opinion among them is unanimous that the joker must have been inserted after the form of the contract was approved by the Corporation Counsel. The joker was worded as follows:

Section 8.—Manufacturers of vitrified fire clay brick or block must file a bond with the President of the Borough (at the time the same are submitted) guaranteeing the delivery of said brick or block within thirty days from the date of the opening of the bids to be in a sum equal to \$1 for each square yard of pavement to be laid, and to be for the use of the said brick or block in the said pavement. If the manufacturer fails to make delivery within the specified time.

The words in parenthesis "at the time the same are submitted," were written in with a pen. According to the testimony of those present, there was but one contractor who had samples to submit. In the advertisement for proposals in the City Record it was stated that the usual bond for the faithful performance of the work would have to be given in each instance, but no mention was made of a bond for the delivery of the brick in a specified time or of any samples to be submitted. The contractors who are not inside the inside say that the purpose of these provisions cannot be mistaken. It was to choke off all competition with the favorite contractors for whose benefit the jobs were put up.

It was pointed out that the time allowed for completing the contract ran from forty-five to eighty days, but by the terms of the order the successful bidder was obliged to deliver all the brick necessary to complete the entire work within thirty days of the execution of the contract or forfeit \$1 a yard for all the pavement laid. Of course, no contractor could dream of signing such an undertaking without the payment of such a bond on hand to the payment. Otherwise he might get caught short or be unable to buy the brick on time and thus subject himself to forfeiture that would simply mean bankruptcy.

The nigger in the woodpile is just this," said one of the disgruntled contractors yesterday. "There is only one firm hereabouts that is in a position to give such a bond as is required in Section 8. None of the other contractors has the brick on hand in the quantities required and any one who might be squeezed to death if he attempted to go into the market and buy it. As a matter of fact the specifications are put up in such a manner that the brick can be bought from only one firm. It isn't a patented article, but it is just as big a graft as the steel-lined concrete viaduct, only it isn't handled by the same persons."

But there is little use of building the combination over here. The outsider hasn't got a show for his life. Cassidy is something like the way the cost of public works in Queens is piled on in the interest of the ring. It is a state of affairs that wouldn't be altered to exist for a moment in any other civilized community. It is no wonder that the taxpayers are putting up a kick. I really don't see how they stand it at all. But of course we can't say a word. The slightest kick on the part of any contractor would bar him absolutely from any work."

I am not a lawyer, but I would like to know what legal right Cassidy has to insert such a provision for bonds as that which covers the delivery of the brick. He has been doing public work for a great many years, but I never heard of such a caper before. I don't believe the Corporation Counsel would stand for it."

Mr. Watt said yesterday that he had prepared the written protest against the awarding of the contracts as requested by President Cassidy, but that he had not filed it yet. He declined to make known its contents on the ground that it would be discursive to the Borough President to make it public until it had been presented to him. Mr. Watt has sent to Washington for information concerning all the patents issued for curbing. He is content that the article called for in the Cassidy specifications is patented and will be shown to be so by the records of the Patent Office. One of the property owners who will be heavily assessed for the projected improvements said yesterday that even if Cassidy were ahead and the vitrified brick graft would not be called off. He said that the Comptroller would be enjoined from paying out any money on the work and that if necessary an injunction could be secured prohibiting the levying of the assessments.

"We are going to see this thing through," he said. "We refuse to be buckled by longer. The growth of this borough is being retarded by excessive taxation. There is a building boom everywhere in the city of New York except in Queens. The contracts now under discussion are only a sample of what is going on all the time. Take the case of the curbing for instance. Why should we be forced to pay from 85 cents to \$1 a running foot for a patented article when curbing for the furnishing of which everybody can freely compete can be set for 25 per cent. less? It's graft, graft, graft all the time, and we taxpayers are the only ones who are to give the anti-machine Democracy a chance to control the county and Assembly district conventions in Queens. The bill provides for a delegate for each vote cast for the best for the Democratic candidate for Governor. At present the conventions are organized on the close corporation basis, the

Assembly district being the unit of representation. There being comparatively few delegates to elect, Cassidy has always been able to carry the conventions by means of the enormous patronage he controls. If the measure now before the Legislature becomes a law it is predicted that he will have the right of life on his hands next fall to retain his leadership. It is even hinted that an anti-Cassidy Democrat may be nominated for Borough President.

MADON ON CITY VIRTUE.

Not Too Good or Too Bad, He Tells the Knights of Columbus.

Police Commissioner McAdoo delivered the address of welcome in place of the Mayor at the opening of the annual State convention of the Knights of Columbus at the Hotel Astor yesterday afternoon. He said in part:

"We want you who come from out of the city to see New York, but not as critics have pictured it or prudes have scolded about it. The only thing bad about New York now is that it is too good. The good is in the children, the good is in the people and so much that the lid hasn't had a chance to be put on it."

"While you are in session I shall give the town a hypodermic injection to make it a bit lively and interesting. I shall expect, of course, your chaplain, Father Curran, to do the injecting. We want New York too good or too bad. We just want it to be interesting. We haven't got wings, but I guess when they come we will get a good wing. I'll see to it that Tom Lee and Mook Duck will make it lively for you in Chinatown should you visit it."

"Crime is a low ebb here. Murders are below schedule. I regret to say, and the pickpockets are not living up to their reputation. Should you lose your watch, however, come to me and I'll get it back for you, and contrary to press reports, you won't have to pay for getting it back. There are 310 delegates to the convention. They are below schedule. I regret to say, and the pickpockets are not living up to their reputation. Should you lose your watch, however, come to me and I'll get it back for you, and contrary to press reports, you won't have to pay for getting it back."

These were augmented to a thousand from the city council. They attended high mass at the cathedral in the morning, which Archbishop Farley delivered a short address of welcome.

A theater party at the Lyric and a dinner at the Hotel Astor wound up yesterday's work. To-day the election of officers and delegates takes place.

YACHT OUT TWO NIGHTS.

Mayflower Found Anchored in the Horse-shoe Mill Pond, Under Investigation.

The schooner yacht Mayflower, which as a center-along slop, worsted the British cutter Galatia in 1888 in a struggle for the America's Cup, sailed from South Brooklyn Harbor yesterday morning for a spin outside the Hook. Aboard her were her owner, Mrs. Eva M. Barker, of 3,138 Broadway; Mrs. T. C. Campbell and her two sons, and Mrs. Barker's niece, sixteen-year-old Edna Mally, daughter of Joseph Mally, who lives at the Trouville, 3,785 Broadway. The elder of Mrs. Barker's sons is a skipper and a sailor.

In the afternoon, in calm weather, the Mayflower ran on a bar at the mouth of the Shrewsbury river. The schooner sailed in each instance, but no mention was made of a bond for the delivery of the brick in a specified time or of any samples to be submitted. The contractors who are not inside the inside say that the purpose of these provisions cannot be mistaken. It was to choke off all competition with the favorite contractors for whose benefit the jobs were put up.

It was pointed out that the time allowed for completing the contract ran from forty-five to eighty days, but by the terms of the order the successful bidder was obliged to deliver all the brick necessary to complete the entire work within thirty days of the execution of the contract or forfeit \$1 a yard for all the pavement laid. Of course, no contractor could dream of signing such an undertaking without the payment of such a bond on hand to the payment. Otherwise he might get caught short or be unable to buy the brick on time and thus subject himself to forfeiture that would simply mean bankruptcy.

PNEUMONIA COMMISSION WORK.

Monographs on Observations to Date to Be Published by the Material for Study.

The commission appointed last fall to investigate pneumonia met yesterday afternoon at the Board of Health Building, Sixth avenue and Fifth-fifth street. It consists of Dr. E. G. Janeway, chairman, and Drs. F. M. Prudden, Theobald Smith of Boston, Fred Billings of Chicago, W. H. Welch of Baltimore, L. E. Holt, F. P. Kinnicut, H. M. Biggs, A. H. Doty and W. H. Park of this city. Miss Anna O'Brien, of the Board of Philadelphia and Prof. Dock of Ann Arbor, with Dr. Thomas Darlington member ex-officio.

Dr. Darlington said after the meeting that a great quantity of material had been collected by the commission, much of it new. Reports will be published in a medical journal very soon, he said, as monographs of the individual members of the commission. These will form the basis of future work of the commission. The work is only tentative. Dr. Darlington said:

Some of the questions before the commission have already been entered into, he said. Much remains to be done on a number of points, such as the condition of the blood of patients, the presence of the pneumonia germ in healthy people and the presence of the germ in the blood of people not actually suffering from the disease.

CRAZY AS KING RICHARD.

Young Man Demanded a Horse at Bowery.

A young man, who said he was E. Robert Conway, 32 years old, of Philadelphia, was taken yesterday to the Essex Market police court as an insane person. He was arrested Monday night in the rooming house of the Young Men's Christian Association.

According to Supr. Hoyt, Conway visited the free library of the branch several days ago and started in to read Shakespeare. At certain periods of his reading, he would jump out of his chair and make imaginary passes as though he had a sword in his hand. When he called at the rooming house last night, he brought a horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse! Hoyt sent to the Eldridge street police station and had Conway arrested.

In the police court Conway said that he was a graduate of Princeton College and showed Magistrate Barlow his diploma. He said that for three years he had been a clerk in John Wasmanski's office in Philadelphia. He said he had come from Philadelphia several days ago.

ATTACK ON THE PALISADES.

BLOCK HOUSE POINT MAY BE BLASTED AWAY.

Plan to "Straighten Out" the Curve of the Hudson County Boulevard—A Blasting Company Offers to Do the Work—Protests to Go Before the Freeholders.

When the Hudson Boulevard, a drive-way which stretches from the Kill to Kull through Hudson county to the Bergen county line, was laid out, the engineers, desiring to preserve what they believed to be the finest viewpoint on the Palisades in New Jersey, planned a loop in the Woodcliff section of North Bergen, running east along Thirtieth street to Block House Point, a famous historical bluff, and curving along the edge of the Palisades to Thirty-fourth street.

Block House Point, standing 300 feet or more above the river, commands a magnificent view of the Hudson as far north as Yonkers and south to the Narrows, while the city of New York lies to the east.

The Woodcliff Land Company, which owned much of the land traversed by the loop some years ago, leased a tract of land lying along the river front north of the point to the Glenside Potting Soil Company, which is now blasting away the Palisades for the purpose of getting crushed trap rock and to make room along the river edge for wharves and railroad purposes.

The quarrying operations have been carried on to such an extent below the loop that the retaining wall has given way in several places and portions of the drive-way have slid down the declivity, doing damage which can not be repaired, it is said, for less than \$150,000.

The Board of Freeholders, for some reason best known to the members, has never been greatly exercised over the destruction of a section of the \$3,000,000 Boulevard and has never taken any measures to preserve wharves by the river force, but yesterday just now the freeholders are wrestling over a petition filed by the Woodcliff Land Improvement Company for a change of the loop from its present position to a new one, which would straighten out the curve of the loop between Thirtieth and Thirty-fifth streets by moving it back to its present position, corner 38th street.

Just now the freeholders are wrestling over a petition filed by the Woodcliff Land Improvement Company for a change of the loop from its present position to a new one, which would straighten out the curve of the loop between Thirtieth and Thirty-fifth streets by moving it back to its present position, corner 38th street. The petition is signed by the Woodcliff Land Improvement Company, through its president, Joseph Meeks, says in its petition that the relocation of the loop would be to the best interest of the county as well, but where the county will be benefited if the change is made the freeholders haven't figured out. The company generally offers to stand the cost of the proposed change, but the cost of the proposed change is not to be paid by the company.

Up on the Palisades persons who were attracted to the spot by the wonderful beauty of the scenery are up in arms over the proposed change of the loop, the proposition to vacate a portion of the loop, the dangerous blasting operations, and the threatened wiping of the map of old Block House Point.

Some of these property owners requested the Board of Freeholders to give them a chance to appear before that body and to protest against the proposed change of the loop. The Board of Freeholders has refused to do so, saying that the petition was not a proper one. The Board of Freeholders has refused to do so, saying that the petition was not a proper one. The Board of Freeholders has refused to do so, saying that the petition was not a proper one.

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Atlantic City, N. J.

CAFE DES AMBASSADEURS.

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THE ARENA.

Atlantic City, N. J.

REISENWEBER'S.

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MOTOR CAR RUNS.

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WHERE TO DINE OUT OF TOWN.

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